



Postmaster Support Guide

A Postmaster's guide to the support available to you from Post Office

Version 13

For further review



SECTION I

The purpose of this guide

This guide has been written to help bring to life the support that is available from Post Office for postmasters. It is not intended to be a guide to everything that is available to you as a postmaster, but is intended to help signpost key support routes. Nothing in this guide alters any of the terms of the contracts between Post Office and postmasters or introduces any new operational procedures, it is simply a guide to the available support.

Why has this guide been created?

Post Office has changed and continues to change. The support Post Office offers postmasters has been significantly increased both in the network and in the support centres. This guide shares what that support looks like so every postmaster can access support when they need it and to ensure postmasters are aware of the most up-to-date support available to them.

We also recognise that sometimes things go wrong, and when they do we will work with the postmaster to resolve things as quickly as possible through the support processes we have in place. We know Post Office hasn't always got things right and we hope this guide gives you confidence that Post Office has changed, with postmasters at the heart of everything we do.

SECTION 2



The relationship

Postmasters are at the heart of the Post Office.

You hold a unique position at the heart of the community you serve. A position of trust. A position of respect.

You have chosen to invest in the Post Office brand and in your local community.

With all this, there is an obligation to the thousands of customers who use our branches to ensure that we are providing the highest quality service and standards. It is advantageous for both Post Office and postmasters to work together to achieve this, and Post Office is committed to supporting you as a postmaster and resetting the relationship with any postmaster where we have got things wrong in the past.

The contracts between Post Office and postmasters require both parties to act in good faith. Post Office will behave fairly and professionally when working with postmasters, and as a postmaster we know you will do the same in return.

This guide has been written to support the relationship between Post Office and postmasters, outlining the expectations of both parties to ensure we collectively deliver for the customers and communities we serve.

If you don't think we are getting it right or don't think a member of the Post Office team is behaving in the right way, we want to know. In the first instance you should contact your Area Manager or Regional Manager; but you can also approach any member of the Post Office management team who will take any complaint you have seriously.

SECTION 3

GENERAL SUPPORT



What we'll do for you:

We provide a number of direct sources of support for postmasters, including face-to-face support, telephone support and digital options.

Face-to-face support

Your primary contact point is your area manager. Your area manager can be contacted by telephone, email or WhatsApp. They provide tailored support for an individual branch's needs and can share performance data and discuss operational issues with you. Area managers and regional managers also hold events and meetings for postmasters.

You can put your area manager's name, phone number and email address below for reference.

Area Manager:

Telephone:

Email:

We also have a range of other face-to-face support options available including training advisors, business support managers, security managers and audit advisors. All are available to support you in the successful running of your business. To arrange a visit from any of these, please contact the Branch Support Centre on or visit Branch Hub in the first instance.

SECTION 3

GENERAL SUPPORT



Digital support

Branch Hub is available 24/7 and provides a digital platform for many tasks that used to be done over the phone. Tasks such as cash and stock ordering and finding information to help you troubleshoot issues are available on Branch Hub and more useful tools are being added regularly to make Branch Hub a one-stop shop for postmasters. We see Branch Hub as a strategic enabler to provide even better support to postmasters and welcome any ideas for more things we can make digitally available for you. You will see throughout this guide that where a digital option exists we have highlighted it to make sure you can always use a digital option when it is available.

Branch Hub also contains the Digital Service Desk, an online version of the IT Service Desk, to report IT issues. If you have an IT issue and are unable to use the Digital Service Desk we also provide a phone number to contact the IT Service Desk on **GRO**

What we ask of you:

Please use the support available to you as soon as possible if you experience an issue.

Keep in touch with your area manager and please join events and meetings you are invited to as these are designed to benefit you.

SECTION 3

GENERAL SUPPORT



Telephone support

The Branch Support Centre can help if you experience an operational issue and should be your first port of call if you need any support but don't know how to get it. The Branch Support Centre can be contacted on **GRO**

If you need support with any of the following issues, the best number to call is listed below:

Cash ordering - Inventory Support Desk on **GRO**
Stock codes – Branch Support Centre on **GRO**
Branch balancing – Branch Support Centre on **GRO**
Transaction Corrections – Branch Support Centre on **GRO**
Resolving a loss – Loss Recovery on **GRO**
Fit and Proper vetting – Branch Support Centre on **GRO**
Smart IDs – Branch Support Centre on **GRO**
Remuneration queries – Remuneration Support Desk on **GRO**
IT issues – Digital Service Desk on Branch Hub on **GRO**
ATM issues – Bank of Ireland ATM Helpdesk on **GRO**
Safe Repairs – Insafe on **GRO**
Security Equipment – Post Office Equipment Team on **GRO**
Reporting suspicious activity – Grapevine on **GRO**

SECTION 4



TRAINING

It is important that you and your team feel confident to conduct Post Office transactions and processes using Horizon. The support that we provide at the beginning of the Post Office journey is key to helping you build a vibrant branch. For any new Postmaster we will fully support you and your team to make you proficient in Horizon navigation, balancing and cash management. This will be done not only through training but through the support of a Business Support Manager whose goal it is to tailor support to help you and your team move from being good to great.

We also appreciate that training support is not just about those early days.

What we'll do for you:

We will provide a comprehensive operational training package to you and your team. We want you to feel you can complete the basic transactions and processes brilliantly.

We have a blended learning approach, which means we provide a combination of online learning programmes, in-branch training, face-to-face classroom courses and operational guides and work aids. There really is something for everyone who needs to operate in branch using Horizon online.

Our Training Catalogue is available and has been designed to take you through the Postmaster learner journey and details of all the different options available. You'll find details of how this can be assigned or booked, how long it is expected to take and where to go for further help with your learning needs.

What we ask of you:

Please take advantage of all the learning available to you and your team. This will give you the confidence and skills to deliver great customer service.

Remember operational training is available to any new or existing members of your team so please browse the catalogue and take advantage of the learning options available. The Operational Training Catalogue is available on [WEBADDRESS.com](#).

Remember to register all assistants and make sure each individual working on the Post Office counter has their own Smart ID.

Did You Know?

We ask for feedback on all our courses. Here is what some Postmasters had to say:

"Best course ever" – Harry Styles on the Branch Balancing Course
"We had clear goals" – Harry Redknapp on the Identity Services Course
"I'd always struggled with X, but now I'm a wizard at it" – Harry Potter on the Basic Transactions Course

SECTION 4

TRAINING

Knowledge Articles



Did you know there is a wide range of information on Branch Hub to help you troubleshoot issues and to boost your knowledge about Post Office processes, products and services? Frequently accessed examples include XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. It's worth checking there first if you experience an issue or want to find out more information – it could save you a phone call to the Branch Support Centre.

You'll find the information on Branch Hub.

SECTION 5



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Customers visiting your branch want to have the best possible experience. Obvious aspects such as keeping your premises clean and tidy, having well-stocked shelves, being open when the customer information says you will be open and friendly, knowledgeable staff all contribute to the overall experience. Not only does this ensure the customer enjoys their visit, but it will also have financial benefits for your business. Acting on customer feedback, both positive and negative, can make a real difference and mean they will want to come back. When there is a consistently good customer experience in the Post Office network, the Post Office brand is strengthened and both Post Office and postmasters benefit from that strong brand.

Standards

It is important to keep the branch safe, clean and accessible so customers can enjoy the branch experience.

What we'll do for you:

We provide advice and feedback on branch standards through your area manager. We can also help you with any further understanding of what is required to meet the Post Office branch standards through your Area Manager if you need it.

We provide branches with a customer feedback tool through Qualtrics ([WEADDRESS.com](https://www.qualtrics.com/weaddress/)).

What we ask of you:

Please keep the outside of your branch clean and well-maintained and make sure the entrance is accessible to everyone and your business complies with the Equality Act 2010.

Inside, please keep the branch clean, tidy and well-kept and the aisles clear and accessible. Please keep all counters and counter screens free from clutter and display any current marketing materials correctly.

Did you know?

Postmasters regularly win awards and recognition for their high standards and customer service. Read their stories on the [One](#) website.

SECTION 5

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Opening times

It is important branches open for their advertised opening times as it gives customers confidence they can access Post Office services when we've said they can. Making sure we have the correct opening hours for your branch also means we can accurately reflect this in your safe access and security monitoring times, keeping you and your staff safe and secure.

What we'll do for you:

We advertise the opening hours for your branch on our online Branch Finder tool accessed by customers. We aim to make the customer-facing website as informative as possible for customers.

We have provided a tool on Branch Hub for you to report any emergency closures.

We will consider any changes to opening hours you wish to make and work this through with you.

What we ask of you:

Please make sure your opening hours match the ones advertised to customers on Branch Finder so customers can access Post Office services during those times.

If you need to report an emergency closure, please do this through Branch Hub.

If you wish to make a permanent change to your opening hours, please contact the Branch Support Centre in the first instance, and please wait for confirmation that the request has been accepted before making any changes to your opening hours.

If the store is open longer than the Post Office, please keep the Paystation™ on the retail counter so customers can access certain services such as energy payments out of hours.

If you have a combi counter, please ensure it is available during your retail opening hours with trained staff available to serve customers.

SECTION 5

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Products

We need to show our regulators and customers that we are following the rules around promoting, introducing and arranging certain products, including Financial Services, money laundering compliance and data protection rules. It's also important that all the products and services we offer are transacted correctly, for example mails items following pricing in proportion guidelines.

What we'll do for you:

We work with the relevant regulators and suppliers direct, meaning you don't have to, saving you both time and cost.

We provide you with products and services that are easy to transact on Horizon, with clear operating guidelines and training and support when needed.

Our website has a customer chat and contact function so we can answer customer queries on your behalf.

What we ask of you:

Please make sure everyone working in the branch complete all their necessary compliance training within the required timescales.

To ensure the best possible customer experience, please make sure all staff know how the products and services should be transacted.

SECTION 6

MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Getting cash and stock levels just right is an important part of running a Post Office branch. Keeping too much cash and stock is not only a security risk to you, your staff and customers, but it could also mean there is not enough cash and stock for other branches. Too little cash or stock and you may not have enough for customers. There are also major productivity benefits in managing the levels of cash, stock and currency at the correct levels in that less cash, stock and currency makes it easier for you to count.

Accurate transactions

Getting the basics right and ensuring that customer transactions are processed accurately helps reduce potential mistakes in branch, makes sure the customer gets the service they want and limits any financial losses to you.

Some top tips:

Please check the amount on screen after you enter the customer's transaction and make sure the Horizon online basket is empty before serving the next customer.

When completing chip and pin transactions, please make sure the correct withdrawal or deposit icon is pressed.

Remember to double-check the physical cash or stock that's being transferred to or from the customer.

It's important that any staff serving at the counter are concentrating on the transaction in hand and distractions such as mobile phones aren't used whilst serving. As well as making sure customer transactions are dealt with accurately it also helps protect against sleight of hand incidents.

SECTION 6

MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Cash declarations and overnight cash holdings

Cash in branch needs to be accurately checked and recorded on a regular basis to ensure the right levels of cash can be delivered and returned. It will also help you identify and resolve any discrepancies quickly or ask for our help in doing so. Holding too much cash is inefficient for you, but also presents a security risk that could impact your personal safety and that of your staff and customers. To help you specifically with cash declarations, we have created a top tips guide that can be found at [WEBADDRESS.com](#).

What we'll do for you:

We'll make sure you have enough cash to meet customer demand, with notes and coins provided at no cost to you, and we plan and carry out cash deliveries and pick-ups from your branch. We'll also work with you to establish the appropriate levels of cash to hold if circumstances change.

We provide you with information on what we think your cash holdings are at any time.

We provide support in investigating any cash discrepancies you may experience.

We provide you with the appropriate security equipment to store the cash and stock required in your branch.

What we ask of you:

Please complete an accurate cash declaration on Horizon for all the stock units used every day as close to 7pm as possible. This should include any stock units which may have only been used to accept Transaction Acknowledgements or to transfer cash/stock/currency. If a stock unit is not used, or if the branch is closed on the next day, please make sure the cash declaration is the last transaction on Horizon that day.

During the declaration, please declare notes and coins against the correct denomination – any damaged or mutilated notes should be declared as 'unusable'. Your cash declarations need to be accurate and a true reflection of the cash held in branch – otherwise it's difficult to plan cash for your branch and to provide support if any discrepancies are identified. After you've completed your declaration, use the variance check function – this makes sure you are identifying any potential discrepancies on the day they happen.

Please check the planned order on Horizon prior to each remittance day to find out how much cash the branch will receive or will have to return on the next remittance. Any cash return pouches should be prepared ready for collection by the CVIT driver by the appropriate time on your remittance day.

You can keep reviewing the level of cash by looking at the balance snapshot and identifying the level of payments against receipts. Please let the inventory team know on XXXX XXXXXXXX if there are any major changes to circumstances in branch, such as a new business customer.

SECTION 6

MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Balancing

All branches need to complete their Trading Period once a month within their designated group. Best practice is to balance weekly so any discrepancies can be identified quickly and over a shorter timeframe.

What we'll do for you:

If a branch discrepancy arises, we provide support and assistance over the phone to help identify and fix the cause of the issue.

If the reason for the discrepancy cannot be found, a dedicated Branch Support Case Handler will work with you to investigate the discrepancy.

What we ask of you:

Please complete an accurate balance each month, and weekly whenever possible, declaring and settling any discrepancies. If a discrepancy is settled to cash, please make sure the corresponding physical cash is put into the account.

If you need help with a branch discrepancy, please call the Branch Support Centre on

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MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Remittances of Cash, Stock & Currency

Branches need to follow the correct process for preparing and receiving remittances to reduce the likelihood of errors in branch.

What we'll do for you:

We ensure that any remittances sent to postmasters are prepared accurately to minimise errors in branch. We count all return remittances of cash and stock to check for errors and issue transaction corrections for any errors.

We investigate any discrepancies in remittances and highlight any issues in branch, for example stock not being booked in, in a timely way.

What we ask of you:

When preparing a remittance, it's worth asking another member of staff to double-check the contents of the pouch before sealing it, if possible.

Please record the amounts being returned accurately and when receiving remittances always check the amount received matches the delivery note.

Please input a delivery of stock items into Horizon within 24 hours of delivery and double-check manually when inputting quantities.

If there is an error in the remittance received, please contact the Branch Support Centre on **GRO** as soon as possible.

Did you know?

Post Office uses a Bank of England calibrated High Speed Note Sorter to identify discrepancies and counterfeit notes. The note sorter also ensures only good quality notes are re-circulated.

Did you know?

You can view the CCTV at the cash centre if you do not agree with any transaction correction raised against a cash remittance.

Did you know?

Returned cash discrepancies are the biggest cause of transaction corrections with just under X,000 issued in 2019. These checks include crediting postmasters when they send back too much cash and last year the total credits issued back to postmasters totalled £xm.

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MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Transaction Corrections

Transaction Corrections should be kept to a minimum in an efficient branch, and following the guidelines on managing cash and stock will help you ensure this for your branch. However, occasionally a Transaction Correction will need to be issued. If you keep getting Transaction Corrections for the same reasons, it would be worth checking your operational processes, and please do not hesitate to ask us for support if you need to.

What we'll do for you:

We always explain the reason for a Transaction Correction and answer any questions you may have about it.

We always try to process Transaction Corrections in a timely way.

If you dispute a Transaction Correction, we will work with you to investigate it.

What we ask of you:

It is up to you how you manage Transaction Corrections in your branch. For example, you may only want to accept or dispute them yourself and for staff to leave them for you to deal with – if this is the case, then please make sure your staff are clear on what to do with Transaction Correction messages on Horizon.

If you do not understand a Transaction Correction, please call the telephone number shown on the Transaction Correction notification.

If you don't agree with a Transaction Correction, please contact the Transaction Correction Disputes Team on **GRO** or **disputeteam** **GRO**.

Please note that you won't be able to complete your monthly balancing until all Transaction Corrections are accepted.

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MANAGING CASH AND STOCK



Branch monitoring

To ensure the accuracy and integrity of branch cash and stock across the Post Office network, the accounting and transactions completed by branches is monitored remotely by Post Office to provide you with the best support.

What we'll do for you:

When we identify a potential issue with branch accounting or transactions, we will complete a desktop investigation to understand the potential issue in more detail.

If the cause of the issue is simple, we will telephone the branch to advise the branch how to resolve the issue.

Where the cause is more complex or the branch requires more support, we will arrange to visit the branch and work with you to try to resolve the issue.

If we can't identify the cause of the issue, we will arrange for an audit at the branch. The aim of an audit is to ensure the accuracy and integrity of cash and stock at the branch and to provide support to the postmaster with any accounting and compliance issues. An audit will always be conducted by at least two Post Office staff and we will always explain the reason(s) for conducting the audit at the start.

If the audit identifies an issue with the accuracy and integrity of cash and/or stock, then we will carry out further investigations into the potential causes of the issue.

What we ask of you:

Please follow the processes for managing cash and stock - when branches comply with the expectations around cash management, cash declarations, balancing, remittances and transaction corrections, it helps us identify any branches that need additional support to achieve that.

If you experience any unexplained discrepancies in your branch, please notify us as quickly as possible, whatever the size of the discrepancy. We can then provide you with the proper level support to try to resolve the situation.

If we contact you about any issue identified in your branch, please work with us to help rectify the issue or provide additional information.



SECTION 7

BRANCH SECURITY

Your safety and the safety of your staff and your customers is very important to us. Full guidelines on branch security for your particular branch format can be found in the Security Operations Manual – please follow the guidelines at all times.

What we'll do for you:

Where applicable, we supply security equipment to every branch according to each branch's circumstances and contract type.

We work with the Police and other external authorities on your behalf to help protect the network from crime.

We provide support to promote security compliance.

We have a zero tolerance approach to issues of violence and abuse towards you and your staff.

We provide support in the event of any security incidents at branches.

What we ask of you:

For your safety, please follow the correct procedures for opening and closing the branch. When entering the branch, make sure the door is locked before the alarm is turned off.

Please formally identify all visitors, including contractors, and record their details.

Always keep your working cash to a minimum and never have more than the maximum your branch format allows.

Please store bulk cash in the safe, with any time-overlocks on at all times, and please keep all safes locked.

Please secure the keys to the cash funding units (eg BidSafe) and drop safes in the main safe during business hours.

Please make sure you use appropriate security equipment.

You can register with the Grapevine service by calling **GRO** to receive proactive security alerts for your area and for the network.

SECTION 8

REMUNERATION



When running a business that includes a Post Office you'll need to understand the revenues and costs of that part of your operation. We provide a monthly advice or invoice that breaks down your branch's revenues by product type and sales volumes, so you can look at your branch sales performance and identify opportunities for growing income and margin.

What we'll do for you:

We remunerate you for transactions that take place in your branch and any that take place online or through our direct channels that are linked to your branch.

We make sure those fees are accurately calculated and paid in line with our obligations, as set out in the contractual remuneration booklets. We occasionally update those remuneration booklets and provide all interim notifications of contractual changes to the remuneration booklets through the monthly remuneration advice/invoice 'inserts', or by personal letter to your registered contact address.

We provide a Support Centre that you can contact by phone on or email at agent.remuneration@ if you have any questions.

What we ask of you:

If you haven't already, please check whether your business should be VAT registered – information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/vat-registration>. Please inform us if you should be VAT registered so we can ensure your contract and remuneration are set up correctly.

Many postmasters already have, but if you haven't done so please register on the online portal to download and review each monthly remuneration advice/invoice. Where VAT is paid, please use these monthly invoices to complete your quarterly VAT returns. If you identify any discrepancy with your own records (or with reference to a Horizon Remuneration Report) please contact the Support Centre as quickly as possible.

Please read and make sure you understand your remuneration booklet and any interim changes we let you know about. If in doubt, please contact your area manager.

If you make any changes to your company, your contact email address or personal address, or your bank account details, please tell the Support Centre as soon as possible.

SECTION 9

DISPUTES AND CONTRACTS



DISPUTES

When things do not quite go to plan, we want you to be confident that if you report the issue to us we will be there to support you. By working together to find a solution, we hope to be able to work out reasonable and practical steps to resolve any issue. By taking this approach, we want to be able to resolve issues amicably without either postmasters or Post Office having to incur significant costs or it taking too long to reach a conclusion. We know we haven't always got this right in the past, but we are determined to work with postmasters on resolving issues going forward.

Whistleblowing

We are committed to conducting business with the highest standards of honesty, integrity and openness. You and your staff can raise concerns in confidence, secure in the knowledge that we will take those concerns seriously and act on them.

What we'll do for you:

We support anyone who raises a genuine concern, even if it turns out to be mistaken. You will not be treated unfairly or liable to any contractual action as a result of doing so.

What we ask of you:

If you have a concern, in the first instance please either contact your area manager or talk to the Speak Up confidential reporting service run by InTouch MCS Ltd on {GRO} or at <https://ws.expolink.co.uk/postoffice>. If this doesn't answer your concern, please contact the Whistleblowing Officer at [whistleblowing@{GRO}](#).

Transaction Corrections

The Transaction Correction Disputes Team will fully investigate all cases, contacting relevant teams and using several systems to try to identify the cause of the discrepancy.

What we'll do for you:

We acknowledge all disputes in writing within three working days.

We fully investigate each case, contacting relevant teams and using several systems.

We send you the results of the investigation with any evidence found to support the findings within 10 working days.

We will arrange any extra support and/or training for you and your staff, if required.

While the dispute is being investigated, you won't be asked to repay the amount.

What we ask of you:

Please call the Transaction Correction Disputes Team on {GRO} or contact them at [disputesteam@{GRO}](#) as soon as possible if you wish to dispute a Transaction Correction.

Please respond to any requests for information from us in a timely way.

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DISPUTES AND CONTRACTS



Investigation process

We ask that as far as possible you undertake your own investigations in branch and we can provide support for you to do this. Help and support can also be provided through the NFSP ([INCLUDE NFSP INPUT HERE](#))

We have a four-tier investigation process to investigate issues and reach resolutions with postmasters to disputes. Not all investigations will require all four tiers of the investigation process and the vast majority of issues requiring investigation are resolved very quickly and simply.

Tier 1 investigations are simple investigations that are usually resolved quickly. These investigations include calls into the Tier 1 team at the Branch Support Centre about balancing, desktop investigations undertaken by the branch monitoring team and some Transaction Correction and settlement disputes.

Tier 2 investigations are more skilled investigations. A Tier 2 investigation would be triggered because the matter could not be resolved in Tier 1. These investigations include calls into the Branch Support Centre that are escalated to the Tier 2 team, more complex Transaction Correction or settlement disputes, and branch audits.

Tier 3 investigations are specialist investigations. A Tier 3 investigation is triggered because the matter could not be resolved in Tier 2. These investigations include security investigations (such as after a robbery or burglary) and investigations undertaken by the Contract Investigations and Resolution Team (CIRT). Very few investigations reach Tier 3.

Tier 4 investigations are the most complex investigations we carry out and are completed by the Case Review Team. A Tier 4 investigation is triggered either because a matter could not be resolved at Tier 3 or because the matter is historical and complex. It is exceptional for an investigation to reach Tier 4.

Did you know?

Postmasters or branch assistants who are responsible for branch balancing and require further support in identifying causes of discrepancies and how to correct them can attend a classroom course for support. Don't forget that the Operational Training Catalogue can be found on [NFSPADONFSP.com](#).

Did you know?

Reviewing the reversals report is a good way of identifying issues in branch and whether any of your staff may be struggling.

SECTION 9

DISPUTES AND CONTRACTS



Issues with Horizon

We have a process in place to proactively identify issues that have the potential to impact branches. We also have a process in place for Fujitsu to investigate potential issues raised by postmasters. We inform branches about issues that affect their operations through Branch Focus or, for more urgent issues, through a Memoview.

What we'll do for you

We make sure we address all issues with Horizon that have the potential to impact branch accounts or operations.

If you have any balancing discrepancies that you cannot explain, we will check for any Horizon issues and advise you if Horizon could be the cause.

If you think there is an issue with Horizon that may explain a balancing discrepancy, we will ask Fujitsu to investigate and we will keep you updated. If Fujitsu does identify that the issue raised could impact branch accounts or operations, we will follow our processes to resolve *[and publish – awaiting decision]* the issue.

[Still to be approved] - We will publish a 'Live Issues Log' on One to explain in clear language what the error is, how it occurred and where possible a solution or workaround.

What we ask of you

If you experience any branch discrepancies, please follow the support guidelines set out in the Branch Support Guide.

Please notify the Branch Support Centre on **GRO** or the IT Service Desk on **GRO** if you think a branch discrepancy is due to an issue with Horizon.

SECTION 9

DISPUTES AND CONTRACTS



CONTRACTS

There may be times when you want to refer to your contract with Post Office. We understand that postmasters will not always be able to easily find their contract in their own records, so we have made the most common standard contracts available to be downloaded from [WEBADDRESS.com](https://www.webaddress.com). For most queries, referring to these standard templates will be enough, but if you have a query about your contract that cannot be answered by referring to the standard templates, please contact [Contracts Team](#) or [GRO](#). A contract advisor will be in touch to answer your query and provide a copy of your specific contract where required.

CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

There may be occasions where the obligations as set out in your contract are not being met. Where this is the case, there is an investigation process outlining the procedures that need to be followed to ensure performance of the contract, while also supporting you in this process.

What we'll do for you:

If there is an issue, we ensure that all necessary steps have been taken by our teams, including your area manager, to support you and address the identified issue. We will gather as much information as possible relating to the issue that has come to light, working as appropriate with both you and other Post Office teams, before taking any formal contractual action.

We will act on any contact from you, written or otherwise, in a timely way.

What we ask of you:

Where reasonably possible, please work with us to resolve any performance issues through the available methods.

Once any investigation has been concluded, please comply with the terms of any letter (including a written direction) issued by us.

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CONTRACT PERFORMANCE



Suspension

There are rare circumstances where it is necessary to suspend the contractual relationship with a postmaster. Any period of suspension should be as short as possible and any suspended postmaster will receive appropriate support throughout this time. A specific contract advisor will be assigned to keep any suspended postmaster up to date with developments during their suspension and will act as a single point of contact through this process.

What we'll do for you:

We only carry out a suspension where absolutely necessary and when all alternatives have been considered.

We will ensure you are supported and keep in regular contact with you throughout the suspension period.

We pay remuneration during the suspension.

We will deal with any contact from you in a timely way.

We will keep the suspension under regular review and bring it to a conclusion as soon as is practical.

What we ask of you:

If a suspension takes place, please comply with the terms of the suspension and be open and honest with us so the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible.

Please respond to any written correspondence and telephone calls from us in a timely way and please remain flexible and available for meetings with the contract advisor to minimise the length of the suspension.

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CONTRACT PERFORMANCE



Termination

Termination is an extremely serious step and it is therefore vital that the termination process is as clear as reasonably possible so misunderstandings between the postmaster and Post Office can be avoided. However, there may be circumstances when termination of a postmaster's contract needs to be considered and a decision to terminate made.

What we'll do for you:

We will gather as much information as possible relating to the issue that has caused termination to be considered, working as appropriate with you and other Post Office teams.

We will treat you fairly throughout the termination procedure.

We will act on and respond to any contact from you in a timely way.

What we ask of you:

Please be open and honest with us and please respond to written correspondence and telephone calls in a timely way to support the decision-making process.

Please remain flexible and available for meetings with the contract advisor if required.

SECTION 10



COMMUNICATIONS

What we'll do for you:

We provide Branch Hub as an interactive tool for you. Branch Hub is available 24/7 and provides a digital platform for many tasks that used to need a phone call. Tasks such as cash and stock ordering and finding information to help you troubleshoot issues are available on Branch Hub and more useful tools are being added regularly to make Branch Hub a one-stop shop for postmasters.

We provide the One website at www.onepostoffice.co.uk. We also send a regular One News email to postmasters that summarises current news.

We publish operational information each week in Branch Focus that branch teams need to know, such as product updates. This is published on Horizon, by email and on One.

We send pop-up memoview communications that appear on the Horizon terminal for urgent operational information.

Regional Facebook groups are available for you to connect with us and with other postmasters.

We provide an email address you can use to ask Post Office-related questions at PostmastersQuestions@postoffice.co.uk and we reply to all emails as quickly as possible.

What we ask of you:

Please read and use the communications channels we provide for you to ensure you keep up-to-date with Post Office news. We welcome your feedback and questions.

Please make sure you and your staff are aware of and implement any changes to products and services or ways of working that we communicate to you.

Please keep us up-to-date with your latest contact details so we can make sure you get communications the way you want to receive them.



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